

The FCC's primary responsibility is to ensure better service for American consumers, at fair prices. Commission policy is to achieve that through competition rather than regulation. Everyone from Verizon itself (in their long distance filings) through the European Commission recognizes this requires multiple viable companies offering service. Verizon estimates the cost of American telecom monopolies at over \$30B; my own estimate is lower, but certainly many \$billions per year are involved.

I therefore urge the Commission, in this case as in others, to determine whether the proposed action will rapidly move America to the necessary level of competition. It is now five years since the telecom act, and a year since Mike Powell was appointed. It's time for results.

In New York State, basic consumers telephone rates just rose 11%. In the last year, broadband prices have increased 25%. Deployment plans are at least 30% lower than a year ago. Hundreds of CLECs have gone out of business.

Objectively, current policies are failing. That means strong and dramatic actions are essential in this and all other commission decisions.

Dave Burstein
Editor, DSL Prime and Telecom Insider